

THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.—The public will hear, with some surprise probably, that Mr. Grissell, who has been engaged for so many years on the New Houses of Parliament, and is indeed identified with them as the builder, has lost the appointment. Tenders were obtained from Messrs. W. Oubitt and Co. Kelt, Jay, and others, which ranged, we believe, from more than 180,000*l.* to 153,000*l.* and the tender of the last-named gentleman at the lowest of the sums will probably be accepted. Mr. Grissell declined to tender.

SAINT WILFRID'S NEEDLE, where, according to Burton, "they used to try maids whether they were honest," is not a stone, but a narrow passage in the crypt beneath the central tower of Ripon Minster. This crypt is of Saxon workmanship, and is probably either a part of the original church built by Saint Wilfrid, or "the new work," which, according to Leland—

"Odo, Archbishop of Cantuarii . . . caused to be edited, when the Minster now is."

This passage is said to have been used as a place of ordeal through which maidens of suspected honesty were caused to pass,—a feat which none but a virgin could accomplish.—K. P. D. E.—*Notes and Queries.*

LETTING OF METROPOLITAN ROADS.—A residue of lots left over to enable the commissioners to lower the rents of the Exhibition year, as clamorously required by the old leases and others, have just been let by auction; when, according to the *Morning Advertiser*, they realized, on the average, rents considerably higher than those of that year! The chairman, Earl of Lonsdale, put up in one lot the first and second districts, comprising the Kensington, Brentford, and Isleworth roads, at 15,450*l.* (old rent 15,890*l.*) Mr. Lewis Levy (of the Stock Exchange, and head of a toll contracting firm) bid at once 15,600*l.* and after a spirited contest, his lordship knocked the lot down to Lewis Levy, for 16,530*l.* The tenth district (City-road), was put in first at 3,150*l.* (old rent 3,200*l.*) but from violent complaints that this sum was much too exorbitant, his lordship consented to put it up without reserve, at 3,000*l.* and the lot let for 3,240*l.* to the old lessee, Mr. J. T. Bolton. The last lot the New North-road, put up at 650*l.* (old rent 780*l.*) produced 830*l.* During the whole of the letting, adds the *Advertiser*, the recriminations of all the contending parties were boisterous and continuous.

VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—On the 15th inst. in the House, Mr. Hindley asked the Chief Commissioner of Works what course the Government intended to pursue in reference to the report and recommendation of the committee on the ventilation and lighting of the house; and whether Dr. Reid is to be restored to the position he occupied before 1846, and to have the charge of ventilating and lighting the house and its appurtenances under the supervision of the Chief Commissioner of Works, assisted by a committee of observation, to be appointed annually by the House, in order to report their opinion as to the way in which the management is conducted? Lord John Manners replied that the opinion of the Government was that the recommendation of the committee was a wise and prudent one, and he believed they had every disposition to carry that recommendation into effect. With regard to the appointment of some competent person, he was not at present in a position to state who the person was likely to be: at the same time they were of opinion that the system of ventilation suggested by Dr. Reid had not received that amount of fair play which would enable the House to judge of it properly. It would be unjust to Dr. Reid to refer to the matter without saying so much in his behalf.

SEWER INVERT BLOCKS.—In *THE BUILDER* of the 12th inst. you published an engraving of Doulton's Registered Sewer Invert Block, but no mention is made of price. I suggested nearly six years ago, to the Corporation of Chester, sewer blocks of similar construction, but the great expense attending them was the obstacle to their introduction.—B. BAYLIS.

THE OXFORD ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—A meeting of this society was held in the Society's Rooms, Holywell, on Wednesday week. A description of the churches in each of the places visited lately during an excursion, namely, Didcot, Stamford, Baulking, Uffington, Sparsholt, and Childrey, was read by Mr. Parker. The Rev. J. E. Millard, Magdalen College, read some notes of a visit to some of the principal towns of France, viz. Abbeville, Amiens, Beauvais, Paris, Rouen, Caen, Bayeux, St. Lo, and Cotance. The Rev. O. Gordon, of Christ Church, called the attention of the Society to a project for the improvement of the buildings of Oxford in 1773. The great object of the author of the proposal seemed to be to disengage and throw open the University buildings. The paper was received by the audience with manifestations of great amusement. The thirteenth annual meeting of the Society was to be held on Monday last, when a paper was to be read by the Rev. William Sewell, B.D. Exeter College, Vice-President, on "The Application of Plato's Theory of the Beautiful to Gothic Architecture."

GRAND MODEL OF EUROPE.—It has been proposed by the Abbé Moigno, a scientific writer of some note, to establish in the Bois de Boulogne, at the gates of Paris, a model in relief of Europe, with all its towns, cities, rivers, lakes, railways, mountains, and forests. This singular model would occupy several acres. The expense of forming it would, it is admitted, be enormous; but that the Abbé contends, is an unimportant consideration, compared to the instruction it would afford not only to youth, but to people of all ages and professions, and to the striking addition it would prove to the curiosities of the *grande ville*.—*Literary Gazette.*

DRAINAGE OF CARDIFF.—A difference of opinion on the subject of pipe drainage has arisen at Cardiff in consequence of the recent discussion at the Institution of Civil Engineers, and conflicting facts and reports urged on either side of the question; the result of all which, so far as regards Cardiff, is the risk of its being left without any drainage at all.

SETTING OUT LAND.—Mr. James Wyllson, in connection with the National Freehold Land Society, has published a very useful Table, shewing the required length of a plot of land of any given width, from 1 foot to 100 feet, to contain an acre or any aliquot part, or showing what part of an acre is contained in any given lot embraced by these limits.

KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL.—The first stone of the new building was laid on the 17th. It will occupy a site bounded by Portugal-street, Carey-street, Grange-court, and St. Clement's-lane, including the disused burial-ground of St. Clement's parish. Mr. Bellamy is the architect; Messrs. Holland the builders. We may give some particulars hereafter.

ELECTRICITY IN WHALE CAPTURE.—The whales, it appears, are about to be astonished not a little by a new Yankee contrivance, whereby the labour and risks of long chase in their capture will be superseded by more rapid manœuvres. The *New Bedford* (U.S.) *Mercury* gives an account of some experiments in illustration. "Every whale," it says, "at the moment of being struck by the harpoon, is rendered powerless, as by a stroke of lightning, and, therefore, his subsequent escape or loss, except by sinking, is wholly impracticable; and the process of lancing and securing him is entirely unattended with danger. The electricity is conveyed from an electro-galvanic battery in the boat, by means of a metallic wire attached to the harpoon, and so arranged as to reconduct the electric current from the whale through the sea to the machine. The machine itself is enclosed in a strong chest weighing about 360 lbs. and occupying a space in the boat of about 3½ feet long by 2 feet in width, and the same in height. It is capable of throwing into the body of the whale eight tremendous strokes of electricity in a second, or 950 strokes in a minute, paralyzing in an instant the muscles of the whale, and depriving it of all power of motion, if not actually of life."

CEMENT CONCRETE HOUSES.—A correspondent says, at East Cowes, Isle of Wight, the gravel on the spot has been advantageously turned to account, by building a pair of cottage villas entirely of concrete, composed of one part of Francis's Medina Cement mixed with six parts of coarse gravel, and two of hoggins or coarse sand. The walls are carried up, as well as the chimneys, by fixing two or three boards vertically, and filling in the concrete between, about 12 to 14 inches thick, by which method, in consequence of the quick setting of the cement, the walls are carried up and the boards shifted within three or four hours after the wall is built. Even the arches are all formed with it, and no bricks are used. This cement, which is manufactured on the island by Messrs. Francis, is largely used in the works at Dover Harbour.

TENDERS

For Congregational Church, Rochester, Kent: Mr. Tarring, architect. Quantities furnished.	
Clements and Son	£4,215 10 0
Robins and Son	4,089 3 1
Walter and Bettles	3,897 17 0
Myers	3,498 0 0
Naylor	3,408 10 0
Brass and Son	3,360 0 0
Harris and Co.	3,568 0 0
Hopkins and Son	3,134 0 0
Food and Sons	3,027 0 0

For finishing thirteen fourth-rate houses, Brake-road, Dalston: Mr. Tinslock, surveyor.

Grooves	£1,465 0 0
Hooks	1,148 0 0
Park	1,070 0 0
Deat and Co. (accepted)	957 0 0
Warne	660 0 0

For finishing seven houses at Poplar, for Mr. Lynes.

Carters	£1,610 0 0
Chapman	1,675 0 0
Hilton and Jones	1,552 0 0
Hartner	1,460 0 0
Deat and Co.	1,470 0 0
Former	1,427 0 0

For the reconstruction of a cessnise for an intended public-house at the corner of Horseay-road and Seven Sisters'-road: Mr. Septimus Hoskins, architect.

Harris, Camden Town	£1,465 0 0
Richards, ditto	1,396 0 0
Scott and Cornwell, Shoreditch	1,119 0 0
Radford, Camden Town (accepted)	1,075 0 0

For a new police station at Reigate, Surrey, for the magistrates of the county, under the direction of Mr. Lappage. Quantities not furnished.

Bachelor, Reigate	£1,508 0 0
Loe, Guildford	1,567 0 0
Reeves, Reigate	1,580 0 0
Loe, Chertsey	1,543 10 0
Thornton, Reigate	1,535 0 0

For a Mansion for Mr. Douglas Jerrold, at Barnes, Surrey. Mr. T. Allom, architect.

Ains	£2,710 0 0
Carters and Ellis	1,477 0 0
Mills (Egham)	1,333 0 0

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Q. E. D." (MS. seems still incomplete: the folios are marked 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, and 10. Plan is engraved). "R. H." (thanks for kind offer). "W. A. P." "C. J." "R. H. D." (see last No.). "Unsuccessful" (under our mark). "T. P." "W. P." "G. T. J." (will appear). "W. M. B." (ditto). "C. L." (thanks). "J. B." "City." "E. B." "O. P. E." "L. C. H." "J. D. P." (we have before now mentioned it). "R. E." "W. M." "Mr. B." "H. A." "W. J." (it is contrary to our custom to point out books. Apply to an architect). "T. A." (we might commit injustice by answering the question on an *ex parte* statement). "T. C. H." (the patronage of the electric light would doubtless undertake it). "No Architect." "Mr. M." "W. M." "O. L." "T. D." "J. H." "F. B." (in Vol. V. p. 196 of *THE BUILDER* will be found an article on the proper construction of lightning conductors. There are various other notices, to which we have not time to refer: see, however, p. 307 of the current volume, on the Influence of Magnetized Steel at the Point of a Conductor). "T. N." (under our mark). "R. E." (we do not know of any account of the houses in question).

"Books and Addresses."—We have not time to point out books or find addresses.

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ADVERTISEMENTS.

COPYRIGHT for SALE.—DESIGNS for T. O. G. and E. L. B. ARTIAN VILLAS, with their plans complete; gardens, details, and furniture; accompanied by estimates and descriptions. The villas are now on sale to suit from £100 to £1,000. Several of them are now being erected. The work will consist of four volumes, containing 120 plates: price and publishing price, 5*l.* The author's works on similar subjects, at prices of 4*l.* and 5*l.* have sold from 500 to 800 copies each.—Apply R. S. Koppel-street, Russell-square.

THE PERMANENT WAY COMPANY beg to inform Messrs. of Dumbarton, Engineers, and others interested in railways, that in order to facilitate negotiations for the use of their patented instruments, and for the construction of railways, they have arranged with Mr. CHARLES MAY, Civil Engineer, 2, Great George-street, Westminster (formerly of the firm of Mansel and May, Liverpool), to manage their negotiations. Communications should be sent to him, or to the undersigned, will meet with prompt attention. **WILLIAM HODDER, Secretary.** Offices, 25, Great George-street, Westminster.